



Missouri Department of Natural Resources

MINUTES

MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION

Lincoln University

George Washington Carver Farm

Jefferson City, Missouri

February 6, 2013

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Gary Vandiver, and Richard Fordyce

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS: SARA PARKER PAULEY, DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES: Harry Bozoian; JON HAGLER, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE: Judy Grundler; BOB ZIEHMER, DEPT. OF CONSERVATION: Clint Dalbom; DEAN PAYNE, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI: David Baker

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT: SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM: Colleen Meredith; NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE: Karen Brinkman; ATTORNEY GENERAL: Tim Duggan; MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS: Kenny Lovelace

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: April Brandt, Christa Moody, Kurt Boeckmann, Jim Boschert, Van Beydler, Alan Freeman, Matt Elliott, Cindy Thompson, Jim Plassmeyer, Judy Stinson, Ken Struempf, Bill Wilson, Colette Weckenborg, Lori Hogue, Cody Tebbenkamp

OTHERS PRESENT: DISTRICTS: Cole: Peggy Lemons; Howard: Beverly Dometrorch, Jefferson: George Engelbach; Maries: Sandy Stratman; Moniteau: Nancy Kirby; Natural Resources Conservation Service: Dick Purcell; Missouri Farm Bureau: Kelly Smith; Missouri Land Improvement Contractors Association: Jeff Lance, Tom Lawlor; Missouri Department of Agriculture: Chris Klenklen; Other: Lincoln University George Washington Carver Farm: Jeremia Markway

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Richard Fordyce called the meeting to order in Jefferson City, Missouri, at Carver Farm at 1:06 p.m. Poll of commission members was taken: H. Ralph Gaw, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver, and Richard Fordyce were present, which made a quorum.

Richard Fordyce stated the Commissioners have received a number of letters from the districts requesting the Commission to reexamine the Matching Grants Program.

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Chairman Fordyce instructed program staff to conduct five regional meetings throughout the state for district employees and district board members to provide information on the Matching Grants Program and receive feedback from the participants.

Chairman Fordyce introduced and welcomed H. Ralph Gaw, the newly appointed Soil and Water Districts Commissioner.

Jeremia Markway welcomed the Commission to Lincoln University George Washington Carver Farm. The George Washington Carver Farm is one of three farms owned by Lincoln University for the purposes of research, extension, and teaching. Mr. Markway stated a tour would be available after the Commission meeting for anyone interested.

B. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1. November 26, 2012 Minutes

Thomas Bradley made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2012 Commission meeting. Gary Vandiver seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, H. Ralph Gaw, Gary Vandiver, Thomas Bradley, and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C. MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Chairman Fordyce introduced and welcomed Harry Bozoian who is the new Deputy Director for Policy/General Counsel for the Department of Natural Resources. He will be representing Director Pauley as the Ex-Officio for the Department on the Soil and Water Districts Commission.

D. ELECTION OF COMMISSION CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Harry Bozoian opened the floor for nominations for the position of chair of the Commission. Thomas Bradley made a motion to nominate Richard Fordyce. Gary Vandiver seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. H. Ralph Gaw, Thomas Bradley and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

Harry Bozoian opened the floor for nominations for the position of vice-chair of the Commission. Thomas Bradley made a motion to nominate Gary Vandiver. H. Ralph Gaw seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. Thomas Bradley, Richard Fordyce and H. Ralph Gaw voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

E. SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

1. Drought Assistance Program Update

Kurt Boeckmann presented the Drought Assistance Program update. As of February 5, 2013, the total number of projects for the Drought Assistance Program totaled 5,367. Of the 5,367 projects, 5,285 were for livestock and 82

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were for crops. The Compliance Review Summary showed over 600 contracts were reviewed by the compliance team and a summary of the findings will be supplied at a future Soil and Water Districts Commission meeting.

2. Long Term Drought Recovery

Ken Struempf presented the Long Term Drought Recovery Proposal. Mr. Struempf provided background information which included the statewide totals for the past five years for the seeding practices along with current rates and prices for legume seeding.

The proposal for a reseeding program for long term drought recovery included seeding pastures in poor condition utilizing the JS-Agron-25 form, legume seed only, payment not to exceed \$10/acre, soil test and fertility is not required, 50-acre maximum per landowner, and a 10-acre minimum per landowner, and maximum per district of \$20,000 which would serve a minimum of 40 landowners. In total, the program would have the potential to serve approximately 200,000 acres statewide. The paddocks must be used for grazing after establishment and the maintenance would require that permanent vegetative cover exist for five years. The seeding rates must comply with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) 512 Forage and Biomass planting and the 723 Vegetation Establishment, Herbaceous seeding specifications.

Karen Brinkman expressed concerns that without evaluating soil tests and proper fertility, the practice may not be successful. In addition Ms. Brinkman expressed concerns about not overgrazing the field until the practice is established.

After discussion, Gary Vandiver made a motion to approve the reseeding program for long term drought recovery pending funding availability. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken, H. Ralph Gaw, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver, and Richard Fordyce voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously

3. Fiscal Year 2013 Cost-Share/SALT Fund Status

April Brandt presented the Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) Cost-Share/AgNPS SALT Fund status as of January 29, 2013. At this time, approximately \$21 million is allocated in regular cost-share, of that amount; \$15.4 million has been obligated. Of the \$15.4 million, \$12 million is obligated in the Sheet and Rill/Gully Erosion resource concern. A little over \$9 million has been paid so far.

There is roughly \$1.6 million in AgNPS SALT funds allocated to 22 projects across the state. Approximately 55 percent has been obligated and 29 percent has been paid.

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4. Soil and Water Conservation Program Reorganization

Colleen Meredith presented the Soil and Water Conservation Program Reorganization. The program's reorganization was implemented February 1, 2013. This reorganization was in response to the information gathered during a Process Assessment/Program Review. The input from External Stakeholders was received at the May 9, 2012 Commission meeting and the same process was conducted with internal staff.

Ms. Meredith went through the changes that were made due to the reorganization. Ken Struempfler will supervise Policy, MoSWIMS, Water Quality, and Training; Colette Weckenborg will supervise Fiscal, Accounting, and Audit sections. District Assistance will go from three sections down to two; Kurt Boeckmann will supervise District Assistance East and Jim Plassmeyer will supervise District Assistance West.

Ms. Meredith also introduced the following new staff: Lori Hogue who will assist with the audit group and Cindy Thompson who will be the new coordinator for Colette Weckenborg's districts.

5. Cooperative Working Agreement

Alan Freeman presented the Cooperative Working Agreement (CWA) update. The Cooperative Working Agreement is an agreement between the conservation partners, outlining the basic roles and responsibilities for each partner in administering conservation programs. Prior to this new agreement being developed, the most recent agreement was finalized in 1997. The committee completing this review included: staff from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Soil and Water Districts Commission, Missouri Soil & Water Conservation District Employees Association (MSWCDEA), and the Missouri Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD).

The committee met four times and updated the CWA with comments from all the partners reflected in the current document. In June of 2012, the agreement was sent to Tim Duggan to ensure that the roles of the Commission and the Program were within the limits of Missouri statute. In December 2012, a final email was sent to the committee members to determine if any additional changes were needed. The feedback from the partners showed that the agreement was ready to move forward.

Director Sara Parker Pauley (DNR) and Acting State Conservationist Karen Brinkman (NRCS) have reviewed and signed the document. With the final approval from the committee and signatures from the Commission, DNR and NRCS, the CWA will be sent to the districts for board signatures.

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All districts are requested to submit two signed copies to DNR. One of these copies will be forwarded to NRCS for their records. The partnership would like to have all these agreements in place prior to the start of FY14.

6. FY13/FY14 Budget Updates

Bill Wilson presented the FY13/FY14 budget updates. The Soil and Water Conservation Program's budget for FY13 totaled \$46,733,769. The total expenditures, as of February 5, 2013, are \$31,662,027

The Governor's recommended budget for the Soil and Water Conservation Program for FY14 is \$46,875,738.

At this time, Chairman Fordyce discussed the Missouri Landowners Improvement Contractors Association Winter Convention that he had recently attended. At that meeting, Dick Purcell provided an NRCS update and Ken Struempf/Bill Wilson gave an update for the Soil and Water Conservation Program. Richard Fordyce suggested developing a letter from the Commission to Karen Brinkman, Acting State Conservationist for NRCS, indicating that the Commission would like to see flexibility in the policy for use of a new terrace design due to the history of terrace construction in Missouri. The letter could include historical data regarding terrace practices that have been constructed using cost-share through the Soil and Water Conservation Program. Missouri is currently the only state to use type two inlets for terraces. Dick Purcell spoke about the new NRCS terrace design program and why the need for the change. Mr. Purcell stated as of August 1, 2013, the system being used will be upgraded and the current terrace program will not be supported.

After discussion, Thomas Bradley made a motion to draft a letter from the Commission to NRCS that would include historical statistics for tile terraces and concerns for the requirements of new terrace designs. Gary Vandiver seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken, H. Ralph Gaw, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver, and Richard Fordyce voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

F. REPORTS

1. University of Missouri

David Baker presented the University of Missouri report. Mr. Baker reported on the new staffing plan, the team that was created to look at soil health, and proposed legislation.

2. Department of Conservation

Clint Dalbom presented the Department of Conservation report. Mr. Dalbom updated the Commission on department's efforts to address the feral hog problem in Missouri. Feral hogs pose a very serious concern for Missouri due to the

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impact they cause to soil erosion, reduce water quality, disease, and direct competition to wild life food and cover. The largest concentrations are on large public land holdings in the state. The Department of Conservation's stance on the feral hog is to eradicate them.

3. **Department of Agriculture**

Judy Grundler presented the Department of Agriculture report. Ms. Grundler provided updates on the survey work with Emerald Ash Borer, Thousand Canker Disease of Black Walnut, and the Gypsy Moth. Ms. Grundler also updated the Commission regarding the Livestock and Farm Protection Task Force and provided bumper stickers to advertise this service.

4. **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Karen Brinkman presented the NRCS report. Ms. Brinkman reported that J.R. Flores is currently on detail in Washington, D.C. at the National NRCS Headquarters through May 2013. Ms. Brinkman gave a brief update on NRCS activities such as contracting workloads for reauthorized programs with the extension of the Farm Bill. The initial allocation for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program for FY13 was a little less than last year at \$25.6 million, with \$8.2 million being used in the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative fund. Included in this allocation are the animal waste, pasture and hayland, cropland and other national initiatives.

Work is still being done on Emergency Watershed Program agreements. NRCS received \$33.5 million last year due to flooding along the Mississippi in April and May. There are a total of 88 project agreements currently, with 62 of those completed and the remainder completed by May 2013.

Ms. Brinkman also reported that NRCS is working on the computer conversions to Windows 7 operating system to be completed by the end of summer in the field offices. This will cause offices to transition to new Engineering Software. Also available is video teleconference equipment at eight field offices throughout the state.

The National Water Quality Initiative will be offered once again this year. NRCS is in the process of identifying three watersheds where those funds will be targeted throughout the state. The focus is to keep funding in the same watersheds as prior years if possible.

Ms. Brinkman also reviewed two handouts: *Introduction to the Pasture Project and Policy-Based Opportunities for Grass-Based Agriculture in the Midwest* and the *Conservation Effects Assessment Project: CEAP Grazing Lands Assessment*.

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In closing Mrs. Brinkman informed the Commission that Chariton Soil and Water Conservation District Chairman, Kenny Reichert was nominated and selected for the NACD/Natural Resources Conservation Service Olin Sims Conservation Leadership Award. This annual award recognizes an individual, district or organization for superior service to the conservation community in promoting and leading conservation on private lands. Mr. Reichert was presented the award at the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) National Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas in January.

5. Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Kenny Lovelace presented the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts report. Kenny Lovelace stated that NACD presented an award for training to the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Kenny Lovelace, Beverly Dometorch, Peggy Lemons, and Sandy Stratman went to San Antonio, Texas to represent Missouri at the NACD Annual Meeting. Howard SWCD received recognition at the national level for a poster that was submitted in their poster contest.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sandy Stratman stated she attended the North Central Regional Partnership Meeting and NACD Annual Meeting. At the NACD Annual Meeting, Ms. Stratman presented a report for the North Central Region and she gave the Commission a copy for their information. Sandy Stratman also congratulated Colleen Meredith for being the Department of Natural Resource's Employee of the Month for January 2013 for her leadership during the drought.

Peggy Lemons stated that the Missouri Envirothon Committee would like to pursue hosting the 2015 National Envirothon competition. Due to Missouri winning the national competition this year, this would be a way to continue receiving national attention. Ms. Lemon's requested support from the partners, specifically approval for NCRS employees, district employees, and program staff to assist with planning and staffing the competition.

After discussion, Gary Vandiver made a motion to support the efforts of the Missouri Envirothon Committee to bring the 2015 National Envirothon Competition to Missouri. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken; H. Ralph Gaw, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver, and Richard Fordyce voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

George Engelbach presented his concerns on the partnerships with the Soil and Water Districts Commission. Mr. Engelbach discussed the Big River Watershed and the potential to recapture metals/minerals that would possibly generate revenue for State Parks.

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H. SUGGESTED DATE(s) OF NEXT MEETING(s)

The suggested Soil and Water Districts Commission meeting is April 3, 2013 in Chariton County. The Commission consensus is to meet on that date at that location.

I. ADJOURNMENT


Thomas Bradley moved the meeting be adjourned at 3:01 p.m. Gary Vandiver seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. Gary Vandiver, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Meredith, Director
Soil and Water Conservation Program

Approved by:



Richard Fordyce, Chairman
Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission
/clm